



## U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations

*PRESS RELEASE*

### **CHAIRMAN BYRD STATEMENT ON PRESIDENT BUSH'S VETO OF LABOR, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, AND EDUCATION APPROPRIATIONS BILL FOR FY 2008**

Washington, DC ó Senator Robert C. Byrd, D-W.Va., the Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, today issued the following statement following President Bush's veto of the FY 2008 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations bill:

õToday is not only a rather gloomy, damp day here in Washington it is also a gloomy, damp day for the American people. Earlier today, President Bush vetoed, virtually cancelled, the Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations bill. This bill contains critical funding for education, for health care, for life saving medical research, for job training, for mine safety, for homeless veterans, for mental health services for returning veterans, and for families who will be struggling to pay increased home heating costs this winter. What a shame. What a cavalier and heartless act by a President who claims to represent all of the people.

õAnd why did President Bush veto this very important bill? The White House says it is because the Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education bill is \$6 billion more than Congress appropriated last year in legislation which he, the President, signed.

õWhile President Bush vetoed the Labor, Health and Human Services and Education bill ó a bill that helps each and every American family in one way or another ó he signed a Department of Defense Appropriations bill that provided \$40 billion more for defense operations, weapons, and military technology than was appropriated last year. I supported this bill, for it includes, among other things, more money for Mine Resistant Ambush Protection Vehicles, military health care, and a well-deserved pay raise for our troops.

õBut I am flabbergasted that while he signed a Department of Defense bill that was \$40 billion more than last year's spending level, he vetoed a bill that was one-third the size of the Department of Defense bill and that would provide health security, income security, and education security to millions of Americans.

õPresident Bush's budget director, Jim Nussle, with whom I met several weeks ago, indicated that he would be prepared to negotiate in good faith with Congress over our differences in spending. To my dismay, Director Nussle has not reached out to the leadership of the Appropriations Committees in the House and Senate in a genuine effort to find common ground. What is the problem? Why, Mr. President? Why, Mr. Nussle? Why is a \$40 billion increase for the Department of Defense fiscally responsible while a \$6 billion increase to educate our children and improve the health of our citizens is bloated spending? Let us stop this display of political petulance, Mr. President.õ

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